


**Preliminary Amendment of U.S. National Stage for International Application  
PCT/EP00/07496 filed August 3, 2000**

At page 3, line 28 thereof, please delete the section heading "Description of the Invention" and insert the following new section heading:

**--BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION--**

At page 4, between lines 20 and 21 thereof, please insert the following new section headings and accompanying text:

**--BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING--**

 The drawing shows a general diagram of the apparatus according a preferred embodiment of the invention.

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION--**

At page 10, between lines 1 and 2, please add the following new paragraph:  
--What is claimed is:--

On a separate, new page 12, please add the following new section heading and paragraph containing an Abstract of the Disclosure:

**--ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

Processes and apparatus for producing esters are described. The processes include: (a) providing a liquid reaction mixture comprising (i) an unsaturated carboxylic acid having a boiling point greater than water, (ii) a polyhydric alcohol, and (iii) a first polymerization inhibitor, in a reaction zone having an inner surface; (b) reacting the acid and the polyhydric alcohol to form an ester, such that a gas/vapor phase is formed comprising water of reaction; (c) removing at least a portion of the gas/vapor phase from the reaction zone to a dephlegmation zone having an inner surface; (d) partially condensing the portion of the gas/vapor phase in the dephlegmation zone such that a condensate is formed; and (e) returning the condensate to the reaction zone; wherein a second polymerization inhibitor is